

REMARKS

Summary

Claims 1-4, 7-10, 13-15, 18-20, 22-25, 43-45, 48, 50-52, and 61-71 were pending. In the present response, claims 1, 43, and 65 are amended, and claims 72-80 are added. No new matter has been added.

Accordingly, claims 1-4, 7-10, 13-15, 18-20, 22-25, 43-45, 48, 50-52, and 61-80 are pending and under consideration.

Rejections Under 35 USC 112, Second Paragraph

Claims 1-4, 7-10, 13-15, 18-20, 22-25, 43-45, 48, 50-52, and 61-71 are rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph. Although Applicants submit that the claims were definite as previously presented, in order to expedite prosecution of the present application, Applicants herein amend claims 1, 43, and 65. Thus, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection.

The Office Action indicates that the claims are indefinite for omitting certain steps. The Office Action states that "without the billing service having any basis for determining the validity of the usage of the billing data this process can not be accomplished. . . . Claim 1 fails to show that the computing device(s) of the billing service can determine validity of usage of the billing data as stated." Essentially, these comments and the additional comments in the Office Action seek clarification as to information in the possession of the billing service to effect the determination of validity of usage of the billing data.

With respect to information in the possession of the billing service to effect the determination of validity of usage of the billing data, the claims provide a sufficient recitation of the relationship between the parties and the flow of the billing data to satisfy 35 USC 112, second paragraph. For example, claim 1 provides for obtaining by the billing service a first and a second billing data from the one or more billing data issuing sources, and providing by the billing service the first billing data to a user for use by said user to conduct transactions with a first web site. The noted features indicate that the billing service is, at least at some point in time, in

possession of the billing data. The noted features also indicate that the billing data provided to the user by the billing service is for use by the user to conduct transaction with a web site. Thus, there is an indicated association between the billing data and the web site, and knowledge on the part of the billing service. The previously recited features therefore appear to establish sufficiently the relationship among the parties and the billing data to overcome the rejection for indefiniteness in the Office Action.

However, to expedite prosecution, claim 1 has been amended to recite that the first/second billing data is provided to a user by the billing service in response to a request received by the billing service for the first/second billing data. Such a recitation indicates that the billing service provides billing data in response to a request for the billing data. Support for such an amendment may be found, for example, in the Specification at page 11, line 11 to page 12, line 19.

In addition, claim 1 has been amended to recite that the first/second billing data is associated with the first/second web site by said billing service or said first/second billing data has been associated with the first/second web site by the user and said billing service receives notification of such association. Having knowledge of the association between the billing data and the web site provides a basis for the billing service to validate the usage of the billing data. The association of the billing data and web site may be made by the billing service. Alternatively, the association may be established by the user and notification of the association may be received by the billing service. Support for such an amendment may be found, for example, in the Specification at page 12, lines 3-4 and 20-22; page 13, lines 5-7; and page 14, lines 1-3.

In its present form, claim 1 clearly indicates the connectivity of the parties and the association between the billing data and the web sites that provides a basis for the billing service to determine validity of the usage of the billing data.

Claims 43 and 65 have been amended in a manner similar to that of claim 1.

Thus, Applicants submit that claims 1-4, 7-10, 13-15, 18-20, 22-25, 43-45, 48, 50-52, and 61-69 are definite, and respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-4, 7-10, 13-15, 18-20, 22-25, 43-45, 48, 50-52, and 61-80 are in condition for allowance. Early issuance of the Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Please charge any shortages and credit any overages to Deposit Account No. 500393.

Respectfully submitted,
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